

Message Text

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ACTION EB-07

INFO OCT-01 EA-07 ISO-00 CAB-02 CIAE-00 DODE-00 DOTE-00

INR-07 NSAE-00 CIEP-01 FAA-00 SS-15 NSC-05 L-03 H-02

PA-01 PRS-01 USIA-06 /058 W

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P R 272215Z JUL 76

FM AMEMBASSY PORT MORESBY

TO SECSTATE WASHDC PRIORITY 1659

INFO USDOC WASHDC PRIORITY

AMEMBASSY CANBERRA

AMEMBASSY JAKARTA

AMEMBASSY TOKYO

AMEMBASSY SUVA

AMCONSUL SYDNEY

AMEMBASSY MANILA

LIMITED OFFICIAL USE PORT MORESBY 0749

E.O. 11652: NA

TAGS: ETRN PP

SUBJ: PNG AVIATION TEAM DESIRES VISIT U.S. TO DISCUSS
POSSIBLE AIR ROUTES

REF: PORT MORESBY 0724 (NOTAL)

1. SUMMARY: PNG CIVIL AVIATION OFFICIALS MET WITH AMBASSADOR
AND E/COFF TO DISCUSS POSSIBILITY OF "DISCUSSIONS" BETWEEN
CAB OFFICIALS IN WASHINGTON AND CIVIL AVIATION OFFICIALS HERE
TO POSSIBLY BE HELD LATE AUGUST OR EARLY SEPTEMBER IN WASHINGTON.
PNG DESIRES TO ESTABLISH LINKS NORTH OF PNG AT APPROPRIATE
TRANSFER POINTS EITHER THROUGH OPERATION OF U.S. SERVICE OR
JOINT SERVICE, AND WITH PROVISIONS LATER FOR AIR NIUGINI SERVICE.
END SUMMARY.

2. DFAT AND CAA OFFICIALS INFORMED EMBASSY IN
JULY 27 MEETING THAT THEY WOULD LIKE TO INITIATE DIS-
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CUSSIONS WITH APPROPRIATE OFFICIALS IN WASHINGTON REGARD-

ING THE EXTENSION OF AIR LINKS TO U.S. TERRITORY. PNG OFFICIALS ARE THINKING OF LINKS WITH HAWAII OR GUAM AND PORT MORESBY. ALTHOUGH THEY ARE NOT PREPARED TO SIGN A TREATY, THEY WOULD LIKE TO DEVELOP AN ARRANGEMENT SIMILAR TO THAT RECENTLY NEGOTIATED WITH THE INDONESIAN GOVERNMENT (SEE REFTEL). THE INFORMAL AGREEMENT (TEMPORARY) COULD LATER BECOME PERMANENT IF IT WORKED TO THE BENEFIT OF BOTH PARTIES.

3. TIMING IS IMPORTANT SINCE AIR NIUGINI IS CONSIDERING THE PURCHASE OF TWO BOEING AIRCRAFT, ONE TO REPLACE THE WET LEASE TEMP AIRCRAFT AND THE OTHER TO USE ON NEW ROUTES. (CAA OFFICIALS EMPHASIZED THAT THEY DID NOT DEMAND AIR LINKS WHICH WOULD BE IMMEDIATELY SERVICED BY AIR NIUGINI, HOWEVER. NEVERTHELESS, THE SECOND JET WILL GIVE THEM FLEXIBILITY IN MEETING NEW COMMITMENTS AND PROVIDE A BACKUP TO THE SINGLE BOEING NOW AVAILABLE. THAT PLANE REQUIRES SERVICING QUARTERLY IN HONG KONG WHICH MEANS CLOSING DOWN PORT MORESBY/BRISBANE SERVICE FOR FIVE DAYS EACH TIME.) OFFICIALS HERE BELIEVE THAT BANKERS WILL WANT TO KNOW WHAT KIND OF ROUTES AND THEIR POTENTIAL PROFITABILITY BEFORE GRANTING LOANS FOR ANY NEW AIRCRAFT. THUS INFORMAL DISCUSSIONS, WITH NO COMMITMENTS FROM EITHER SIDE NECESSARILY, SHOULD ENABLE AIR NIUGINI TO EITHER CONCENTRATE ON AIR LINKS WITH JAPAN AND INDONESIA OR CONSIDER THE POSSIBILITY OF PUTTING SOME OF ITS RESOURCES INTO OTHER (U.S.) AREAS.

4. THE CAA TEAM WILL BE HEADED BY COMPTROLLER OF CAA JOSEPH TAUVASA AND INCLUDES SUPT. OF AIR TRANSPORT INTERNATIONAL JULIAN FORSYTH AND EXECUTIVE ASST. MRS. FIONA PARSONS PLUS A GPNG REP FROM THEIR WASHINGTON EMBASSY. IT IS PROBABLE THAT NEW AIR NIUGINI GENERAL MANAGER BRIAN GREY WILL ALSO ATTEND TALKS WITH HIS ASSISTANT BART PHILEMON.

5. FORSYTH STRESSED THAT FORMAL TALKS WERE NOT NECESSARY AT THIS STAGE AND THAT SOME INFORMAL DISCUSSIONS HAD ALREADY TAKEN PLACE WITH PANAM. HE ALSO SAID THAT CONTINENTAL AIRLINES AND AIR MICRONESIA WERE INTERESTED AND WOULD BE LIMITED OFFICIAL USE

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WELCOMED HERE IF ARRANGEMENTS COULD BE WORKED OUT.

6. COMMENT: DISCUSSIONS WITH U.S. OFFICIALS IS A NATURAL DEVELOPMENT FOLLOWING CLOSELY UPON SUCCESSFUL DISCUSSIONS WITH THE INDONESIANS. WE DO NOT KNOW THE STATE OF PLAY WITH JAPAN, BUT FORSYTH APPEARED CONFIDENT SOMETHING COULD BE DEVELOPED OF MUTUAL BENEFIT. HE ALSO SAID THAT THE UNDERSTANDING WITH THE PHILIPPINES PROVIDING FOR ONE SERVICE WEEKLY

WAS A GREAT SUCCESS AND THAT SERVICE MIGHT SOON BE INCREASED.
(HE ADDED THAT THE PHILIPPINES HAVE RECIPROCAL RIGHTS TO LAND
AT PORT MORESBY BUT IS NOT PRESENTLY EXERCISING THEM.)
FORSYTH ALSO SAID THAT CAA OFFICIALS, HIMSELF
INCLUDED, WOULD VISIT AUSTRALIA NEXT WEEK TO SECURE
AN EXTENSION OF AIR NIUGINI SERVICE FROM BRISBANE TO
SYDNEY - SOMETHING HIGHLY DESIRED BY AIR NIUGINI
OFFICIALS HERE.

7. ACTION REQUESTED: PLEASE INFORM WHETHER
APPROPRIATE U.S. CIVIL AVIATION OFFICIALS CAN RECEIVE
PNG GROUP IN WASHINGTON IN LATE AUGUST OR SEPTEMBER
FOR DISCUSSIONS ABOUT THE ESTABLISHMENT OF AIR LINKS
BETWEEN PNG AND U.S. TERRITORY. FORSYTH SAID HE WAS
ALSO INTERESTED IN VISITING WITH ALLEGHENY AIRLINE
OFFICIALS, BUT WE WILL REQUEST ASSISTANCE IN SETTING
UP THAT APPOINTMENT ONCE THE CAB/STATE MEETING IS
ARRANGED.
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